

REMARKS

Claims 9-23 are present in this application. Claims 9, 16, and 23 are independent claims.

35 USC 103(a) – Merrill

Claims 9-23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,160,663 (Merrill). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 23 recites, among other things, “a reflective polarizing sheet” having a coefficient of linear expansion in a first direction different than in a second direction, in a plane.

The Examiner alleges that any one of films 106, 110, 112, and 114 of Merrill teach the claimed reflective polarizing sheet (Office Action at page 3, paragraph 6). Applicants disagree with the Examiner’s argument that any of the films 106, 110, 112, and 114 teach the claimed reflective polarizing sheet. Of these films, Merrill specifically discloses 114 as “a reflective polarizer film” (col. 7, lines 32-33).

Otherwise, Merrill discloses a reflector 106 located behind light guide 108, a diffuser film 110, and a brightening film 112. Applicant submits that one of ordinary skill in the art would understand that the reflector 106, diffuser 110 and brightening film 112 do not teach the claimed “reflective polarizing sheet.”

The Examiner further alleges that a second sheet 106 is disposed adjacently to any one of films 110, 112, and 114 (Office Action at page 3, paragraph 6). Applicants disagree with the Examiner’s argument at least because the Examiner interprets “adjacently” in a manner that is inconsistent with the ordinary dictionary definition.

A Merriam-Webster dictionary definition of “adjacent” is - immediately preceding or following, absent of anything of the same kind in between.

Applicants submit that film 112 is a film that is adjacent to reflective polarizer film 114, based on this dictionary meaning of “adjacent.” In any case, Applicants submit that based on the dictionary meaning of “adjacent,” one of ordinary skill would understand that reflector 106,

being located behind light guide 108, is at least not adjacent to diffuser 110, brightening film 112 or reflective polarizer film 114.

Furthermore, claim 23 recites a structural relationship, “wherein the second optical sheet is arranged on the side opposite to light sources provided in the backlight unit with respect to the reflective polarizing sheet.” As can be seen for example in present Fig. 1A, prism sheet 7 is arranged on the side opposite to light sources 1 provided in the backlight unit with respect to the reflective polarizing sheet 6. In other words, the claimed “side opposite to light sources” implies a direction of light from light sources, such that a second optical sheet is opposite to the reflective polarizing sheet from the light source.

The Examiner, however, has made an unintended interpretation that reflector 106 of Merrill can constitute a second optical sheet arranged opposite to light sources 108 with respect to the reflective polarizing sheet (allegedly any of 110, 112, and 114).

In order to clarify the intended meaning of “opposite to,” claim 23 has been amended to replace “opposite to” with “away from” light sources, such that “the side” pertains to a side of the reflective polarizing sheet away from the light sources. As can be seen, for example in present Fig. 1A, both the reflective polarizing sheet 6 and the prism sheet 7 are located on the same side of the light sources 1, with prism sheet 7 being on a side of reflective polarizing sheet 6 away from light sources 1.

Claims 12 and 19 have also been amended in a similar fashion.

Applicants submit that Merrill does not show a film arranged on the side, away from light sources 108 provided in the backlight unit, of the reflective polarizer film 114.

At least for these reasons, Applicants submit that Merrill fails to teach or suggest each and every feature recited in claim 23.

As Applicants have previously argued, unlike Merrill the present invention pertains to a solution of a “warping” problem due to “adjacent” films having different thermal expansion

coefficients. Merrill discloses a warping problem that can occur due to differences in thermal expansion characteristics between a film or sheet and a frame or bounding surface (see Merrill at col. 2, lines 13-23).

The Examiner alleges that warping due to temperature may require correction of all films 106, 110, 112, and 114 (Office Action at page 4, first full paragraph). In other words, the Examiner's position is that the problem of warping in Merrill applies to all films 106, 110, 112, and 114, such that the problem must be solved for each film.

Applicants submit that the Examiner's argument still does not pertain to the "warping" problem addressed in the present application. In particular, even if it could be said that Merrill teaches accommodating for thermal expansion in each film 106, 110, 112, and 114, Merrill does not disclose the claimed relationship between adjacent sheets of "wherein, the coefficient of linear expansion of the second optical sheet in the direction corresponding to the first direction is approximated to the coefficient of linear expansion of the first optical sheet in the first direction."

Thus, Applicants submit that the rejection fails to establish *prima facie* anticipation for claims 9, 16, and 23, as well as respective dependent claims. Applicants request that the rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Robert W. Downs Reg. No. 48,222 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

Application No. 10/564,391
Amendment dated January 27, 2010
Reply to Office Action of October 29, 2009

Docket No.: 1254-0302PUS1

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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